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Nuclear Science Division

Mary Jo Dorsey

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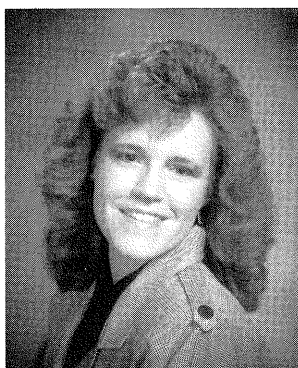
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NUCLEAR SCIENCE DIVISION

The division has a special interest in Nuclear Science and in advanced energy systems such as nuclear, solar, wind, geothermal, and tidal. Its concern in these fields includes, but is not limited to, research, policy and analysis, development and production.

FROM THE CHAIR

MARY JO DORSEY



Midwinter SLA, and I haven't got a thing to wear....

As we approach the halfway mark en route to Montreal, I must say that the path has

been interesting—to say the least. After breaking my right arm last fall (yes, I am right-handed!) at the exact time everything was coming due at SLA Headquarters for the preliminary schedule, I think it is finally safe to say that things are in order. I am learning, however, that our division, despite its modest size, is not something that I can handle on my very own. I need your help! I need your participation. What can we do as a group of professionals in this unique niche of the energized world to make this a division that will work for us?

Last summer, the folks at Brookhaven National Laboratory established a base for the Nuclear Science Division listserv. Although the number of takers to the list has been light, I hope that a new union can be made with those who intended to join but have not yet.

What IS this list thing?! It's a wired forum! By subscribing to the list, one enters a new realm of collaboration amongst colleagues. What's best—it's free, it takes very little time and effort, and it's all-inclusive. When a message is sent to the list, it is distributed to everyone who subscribed.

Imagine this scenario: a patron comes to you with a request for information that is unfamiliar. BUT—it's a topic you vaguely recall discussing with Jane Doe (a nuclear science librarian you met at SLA conference two years ago). You are a member of the nuclear science listserv, and more than likely, so is Ms. Doe. You pose the question to the list that afternoon. Before you get ready to go home for the evening, you check your E-mail one last time and see that there is a message waiting for you. You find that it is a reply from the nuclear science list!! The response is not from Jane Doe. It is from John Smith. Who is John Smith? He's a member of the list who doesn't usually get to attend SLA conferences. But he also just happens to answer your question with the greatest of ease.

Wow! you're impressed, right? Small world. You thought the division was rather small? Well, let's make it a little smaller!

So how do I subscribe again? It's as easy as 1-2-3.

1. Send an electronic mail message to listserv@bnl.gov
2. In the body of the message, type subscribe nucsci-1 <your name>
3. Send the message. You're set.

I hope you all enjoy the article by Laurie Scott of AECL CANDU. If you would like to contribute an article that features your information center, or highlights work taking place within your organization, please contact me at dorsey@ymv5.ymv.gov. I can also be reached by phone at (702) 794-7537.

AECL CANDU—CREATING AN INFORMATION MANAGEMENT VISION

By Laurie J. Scott, MRS,
Information Management Specialist

AECL CANDU is the engineering and marketing arm of Atomic Energy of Canada Limited, a Canadian federal "Crown Corporation" established in 1952 to develop the peaceful uses of nuclear energy for the national benefit of Canada. We are responsible for the development, design, and marketing of the CANadian Deuterium Uranium) Nuclear Power Reactor. AECL CANDU's head office is in Mississauga (near Toronto), and we have other offices throughout the world, including Washington, Seoul, and Bucharest.

Change has been the name of the game at AECL CANDU over the last few years, and the Information Resources Centre (IRC) has been at the

centre of a proactive approach to transform how we manage information in the company. A new vision for Information Management has been unfolding, as we move ahead toward the concept of the virtual library.

The IRC houses extensive collections of technical reports, standards, books and journals. Our clients consist of engineers and scientists, as well as marketing and business staff. There are five staff in the IRC—two Information Specialists (MLSs), and three Information Technicians (2-year college diplomas). We also occasionally employ co-op students from the University of Western Ontario's Graduate School of Library and Information Science. We are fully automated using the integrated SydnexPlus system on a Novell LAN for our OPAC, serials control, tracking acquisitions, etc. The OPC is searchable from our clients' desktops, stand-alone CD-ROM products, such as Compendex Plus and INIS, and the ASME Boiler and Pressure Vessel Code is mounted on our network for company-wide access. We have recently added an Internet workstation, with Mosaic, which will be available to staff who do not yet have desktop access to the Internet. As well, IRC staff will use it to conduct research on the 'Net.

One of the most visible indications of the enormous change we are undergoing was the relocation of the IRC, which took place in March of 1993. Until then, the "library" had been located in rather disjointed, dark, and dingy space in the middle of our building with a hodgepodge of furniture and shelving that had been acquired a

bit at a time. Much of it dated from the sixties and seventies, and was in gaudy shades of green, yellow and orange. This furniture, combined with the equally unattractive colors on the walls and a very old and tired linoleum floor resulted in a truly unpleasant environment. Not only was it not an appealing place in which to spend eight hours a day, but it actively worked against everything we were trying to achieve. It didn't evoke the modern, professional, electronic information centre we envisioned, and which we were marketing to our clients. To the contrary—it appeared outdated, slap-dash and ill-conceived.

The opportunity to change all that came with the decision to centralize Information Management functions (the IRC and Records Management) in one location—a kind of “one stop shopping” for information, whether it is internally or externally created. We were extremely fortunate to have the strong support and tireless efforts of our senior manager in securing a suitable location and the funds with which to make our vision a reality. Our goal was to create an information centre which would be a visual testament to our professionalism and our commitment to developing a true, virtual library.

Our new information centre is everything our old library was not. It is bright (thanks to a multitude of windows), attractively furnished, professional, and it places technology front and centre. Space is used effectively, with compact mobile shelving, efficient information desks, and standardized staff workstations. As you

might imagine, we were all quite delighted with our new surroundings.

Of course, the changes are not simply cosmetic. Records Management and IRC staff are much more fully integrated than they were in the past, have learned about one another's responsibilities and resources, and have developed a highly cooperative, team atmosphere. Additionally, we have been successful in improving the professional image of both the IRC and Records Management within the company, something that would have been extremely difficult, if not impossible, in our old location.

The vision for Information Management continues to evolve, and there will be many challenges ahead as we strive toward the virtual library. For example, the Research arm of AECL has libraries in two locations—at the Chalk River Laboratories in Ontario, and at the Whiteshell Laboratory in Manitoba—and standardization and consolidation of services, systems and procedures among our three sites are just a few of the issues we will be dealing with in the near future. As well, further cooperation and interaction with the Records Management section is also expected to be ongoing, as the company continues to develop its Electronic Document Management System (ELMS).

One of the popular current catch phrases is “The only constant is change.” That is certainly true for us, as it surely is for most corporate information professionals. The challenge is to see change as an opportunity rather than a threat. While some of our change has

brought its share of pain, it has also brought tremendously exciting times and the potential for great strides and achievements.

Laurie J. Scott is Information Management Specialist at AECL CANDU, Information Resources Centre, 2285 Speakman Drive, Mississauga, Ontario, Canada L5K 1B2

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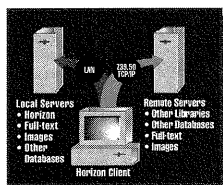
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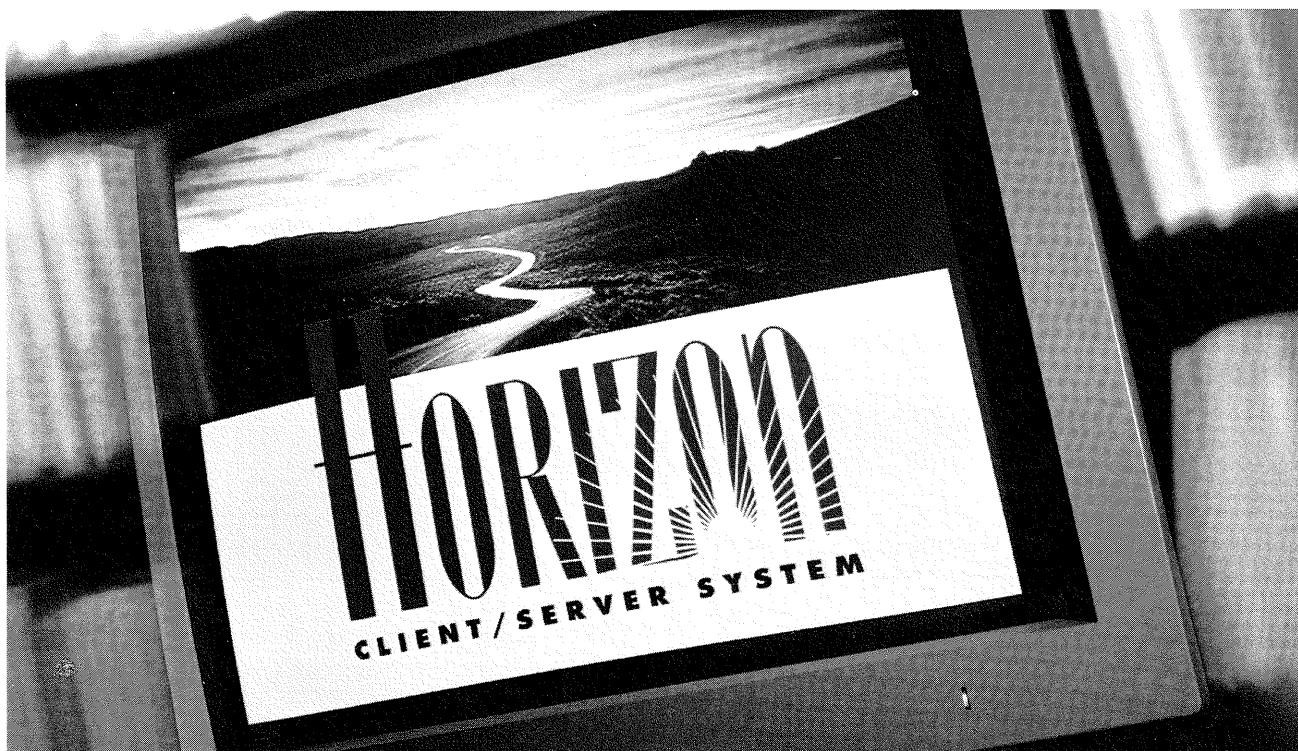
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